

in the spring and summer, and treasures like historic Harpers Ferry year-round.

I am proud to represent West Virginia in this distinguished body. I hope my colleagues will join me in celebrating West Virginia's 135th year in the Union, and that they and their constituents can gain inspiration from West Virginia's motto, Mountaineers Are Always Free.●

TRIBUTE TO ANDREA L. ALDRICH OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, 1998 DISCOVER CARD STATE TRIBUTE AWARD SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

● Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to commend Andrea Aldrich of New Hampshire for receiving the Discover Card State Tribute Award Scholarship for 1998.

Established in 1992, the Discover Card Tribute Award program honors outstanding high school juniors and seniors across the United States and overseas schools. The Tribute Award Program honors excellence in community service, leadership, special talents, unique endeavors, and obstacles overcome. Of nearly 11,000 students nationwide who applied this year, only those who most exemplify these characteristics receive the scholarships. Winners may use their scholarships for any type of post-high school education or training.

Gold, silver, bronze and merit State Tribute Award scholarships are awarded in three categories of study: Arts and Humanities, Trade and Technical or Science, Business and Technology. Due to her outstanding written statement, Andrea received a gold award in the category of Trade and Technical Studies.

It is no wonder Andrea is one of the recipients of such a competitive award. A member of National Honor Society, student council, a peer mediator, and captain of the varsity cheerleading team at Plymouth Regional High School in Plymouth, New Hampshire, Andrea has proven her leadership abilities in varying experiences.

In addition, she has found the time to improve the community around her in many ways. In 1995, a self-initiated community service program was begun by Andrea in order to assist underprivileged school-age children in obtaining school supplies. This program, entitled "School Collectibles," has been so successful that it led to Andrea's receiving a bronze 1997 Prudential Spirit of Community Award in New Hampshire. In order to extend her services beyond the state, Andrea paid her own way to Philadelphia to volunteer at St. Francis' Soup Kitchen for an entire April school vacation. She has long been involved in theater productions at school, and has been a dancer for many years. Andrea's generosity, leadership skills and talent in theater illustrate only some of the outstanding characteristics that make her a model citizen and a well-rounded, motivated person.

I wish to congratulate Andrea for all of her accomplishments, and especially for being a distinguished recipient of the Discover Card State Tribute Award. It is an honor to represent Andrea L. Aldrich in the United States Senate.●

FISCAL YEAR 1999 ENERGY/WATER APPROPRIATIONS BILL

● Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I voted in favor of this bill, the FY 1999 Energy/Water Appropriations bill. There is much to support in the bill.

In particular, it provides essential resources to preserve and maintain our nation's waterways, support safe and efficient cleanup of nuclear waste, and promote more constructive utilization of our energy resources. And while the bill increases spending for these items over last year's level, the overall spending provided in this bill is more than \$350 million less than the amount requested by the Administration.

However, as elected officials, we bear no greater responsibility than to ensure that the American people's hard-earned tax dollars are utilized in the most prudent fashion for essential government functions and services. Open and fair consideration of federal expenditures is the cornerstone of maintaining public confidence in their government.

I fully realize the daunting task faced by the Appropriations Committee in allocating limited funds among diverse, competing interests and priorities. Yet I am disappointed when the decisions on priorities reflect not national priorities, but parochial and political priorities.

As we begin the appropriations season with consideration of the FY 1999 Energy/Water Appropriations bill, I am once again astounded at the volume and creativity of the shortcuts that the Congress uses to circumvent the normal, merit-based review of spending decisions.

This bill includes over \$920 million for hundreds of earmarks in both bill and report language. These are earmarks for projects that are unrequested, unauthorized, and location-specific, and that have not been considered in the appropriate merit-based review process. It also contains earmarks for vaguely stated projects for which only a cursory explanation, or none at all, is provided to the Senate.

Mr. President, I prepared a list of objectionable provisions in this bill, which totalled 19 pages. This list is available on my website at <http://www.senate.gov/mccain>.

Let me take just a moment to bring to my colleagues' attention some of the most egregious provisions in this legislation:

An earmark of an additional \$3.9 million for maintaining outdoor recreation facilities at Ponce de Leon, Florida. It is somewhat hard to imagine what types of facilities in a single loca-

tion require nearly \$4 million in maintenance per year.

An earmark of \$200,000 for feasibility studies along the Alabama River below the Claiborne Lock and Dam to determine measures necessary to improve the navigation channel in order for projects along the river to realize their full economic potential.

Certainly, it would be unfortunate if the businesses located along this stretch of the Alabama River were hindered in any way from economic success by virtue of the condition of the navigation channel. However, would it not be reasonable to expect those businesses and local communities to contribute at least to studying possible improvements to enhance their operations?

An earmark of \$8 million to initiate a general reevaluation report to determine the feasibility of further deepening the Miami Harbor Channel in Florida and providing reimbursement to local sponsors. Mind you, this is not \$8 million to deepen the channel—it is simply to study the feasibility of deepening the channel. And this \$8 million is not necessarily the full amount that will be required to complete that study and, of course, to reimburse local sponsors of the project.

An earmark of an additional \$5 million in the flood control account for construction at the Louisiana State Penitentiary. Unfortunately, the committee report sheds no light on what type of construction is involved, nor does it provide any justification for an increase of \$5 million above a request of just \$400,000.

An additional \$2.3 million earmarked in a line item entitled "Project modification for improvement of the environment" for the Lower Hamm Creek, Washington, restoration project. This seems to be a start-to-finish sort of add-on; the report language states this funding is to be used to "complete plans and specifications, and initiate and complete construction" of the project. Let's hope there is not another add-on next year.

An earmarked add-on of \$5 million for the Alaska Power Administration, for which no funding was requested. This entity is in the process of being sold to the State of Alaska, but this bill requires the taxpayers to spend \$5 million, in addition to the \$2.5 million already spent, to repair or replace a cable prior to the sale.

And finally, with all due respect to my colleague from Alaska, the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I must question the earmark of \$20 million to establish a new commission, called the Denali Commission. This commission is established to prepare a comprehensive plan to spur Alaska's economic growth. I have several concerns about this supposedly temporary commission. Why are all Americans required to contribute to the preparation of this study, which will benefit only Alaska? Will this commission follow the same costly footsteps as the Appalachian Regional Commission, which